

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PGOV, MILI, HA, US
SUBJECT: HAITI'S NEW FOREIGN MINISTER SEEKS CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP

1. SUMMARY: DURING EXTENDED CONVERSATION WITH ME MARCH 26
NEWLY DESIGNATED FOREIGN MINISTER BRUTUS SPOKE FREELY AND
AUTHORITATIVELY ABOUT US/GOH RELATIONS, THE PROBLEM OF HAITI'S
IMAGE IN THE U.S., THE ECONOMIC PRIORITIES OF PRESIDENT
DUVALIER, AND THE LIMITED SELF-DEFENSE ORIENTATION OF THE
HAITIAN MILITARY. BRUTUS WILL HEAD GOH DELEGATION APRIL 17/18
FONMIN MEETING.

2. EDNER BRUTUS, THE ELEGANT, ARTICULATE, AND VIGOROUS
SCHOLAR/DIPLOMAT WHO REPLACED RAYMOND AS FOREIGN MINISTER,
MUS IN GOOD FORM DURING A 1 1/2 HOUR CONVERSATION WITH ME
MARCH 26 (THE FIRST AUDIENCE, HE NOTED, HE HAD GIVEN ANY
AMBASSADOR). HE SEEMED THOROUGHLY AT EASE, APPEARED TO BE ON
CLOSE TERMS WITH PRESIDENT DUVALIER, AND THROUGHOUT
THE DISCUSSION CONVEYED HIS DEDICATION TO BUILDING A
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. BASED ON CANDOR, MUTUAL
RESPECT, AND THE RECOGNITION OF SHARED HISTORY AND
SHARED IDEALS. "GEOGRAPHIC DETERMINISM", HE SAID, LEFT
HAITI NO ALTERNATIVE BUT FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.,
AND IN ITS EFFORTS TO RECONSTRUCT THE ECONOMY HAITI
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WOULD LOOK TO THE U.S. FOR COUNSEL AND HELP, WITHOUT

HOWEVER SEEKING SPECIAL TREATMENT OR POSING INORDINATE DEMANDS. MEN, JUST AS GOVERNMENT, OWED IT TO THEMSELVES ABOVE ALL TO BE HONEST, ADMIT MISTAKES, AND PROCEED FROM THERE; HE WOULD BASE HIS CONDUCT OF OFFICE ON THAT PRECEPT.

3. I SAID THESE SENTIMENTS ACCORDED WELL WITH OUR OWN, AS EXPRESSED MOST RECENTLY BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS REMARKS ON THE OCCASION OF AMBASSADOR BOUCHETTE'S PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS. I RAISED THE MATTER OF THE FORTHCOMING SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON THE AID PROGRAM FOR HAITI, EXPLAINING THAT ALTHOUGH THIS WAS A MATTER FOR US TO DEAL WITH, THE HAITIAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE WELL AWARE OF THE NATURE OF THE CRITICISMS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT AND SHOULD TAKE THEM INTO ACCOUNT.

4. BRUTUS TOOK THIS WELL, CONCEDING THAT HAITI'S IMAGE IN THE U.S. HAD BEEN A BAD ONE CONSEQUENT UPON THE HARSH POLITICAL BATTLES UNDER DUVALIER PERE; THE EXILES IMAGINED THAT TIME STOPPED THE MOMENT THEY LEFT THEIR COUNTRY; THEY COULD NOT ADJUST PHYCHOLOGICALLY TO CHANGES FOR THE BETTER. HE SAID THAT JEAN-CLAUDE DUVALIER, ALTHOUGH BEARING HIS FATHER'S NAME, SAW HIMSELF AS UNDERTAKING AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT VOCATION FOR HAITI. THE FIERCE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL BATTLES WERE OVER; THE CURRENT TASK WAS TO ESTABLISH AN ECONOMIC STRUCTURE ADEQUATE FOR HAITI'S NEEDS, FOR ANY REVOLUTION THAT IGNORED THE NATIONAL ECONOMY WOULD BE FRAGILE. THE PRESIDENT WAS DEDICATED TO PEACE AND HONESTY; HE WOULD "MAKE WAR ON THE THIEVES;" BUT HE HAD TO MOVE WITH CIRCUMSPECTION, FOR THERE WERE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS IN ALL MOVES TO THAT END.

5. I TOOK THE OCCASION TO REFER TO GOH ARMS EXPENDITURES, SEPCIFICALLY TO A LICENSE APPLICATION FOR T-28 ARMAMENT SETS, NOTING THAT THIS EXPENDITURE WOULD NOT BE IN GOH INTERESTS SINCE THE AIRCRAFT, IN CONTRAST TO WHAT THE MILITARY SURVEY TEAM HAD ENVISAGED OVER A FIVE YEAR PERIOD, WERE NOT YET OPERATIONAL, NOR WERE THERE ENOUGH PILOTS TRAINED TO FLY THEM. MOREOVER SUCH AN EXPENDITURE MIGHT BE MISUNDERSTOOD IN QUARTERS ALREADY CRITICAL OF THE GOH. BRUTUS COMMENTED THAT IN VIEW OF PAST INVASION ATTEMPTS THE MILITARY MODERNIZATION PROGRAM

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WAS DESIGNED TO DISSUADE OTHER VENTURES, NOT FOR USE DOMESTICALLY. HE AGREED IN ANY CASE THAT MILITARY EXPENDITURES SHOULD NOT BE EXCESSIVE. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT WE COULD NOT APPROVE THE APPLICATION AT THIS TIME, BUT SEEMED PLEASED TO KNOW THAT WE WOULD CONTINUE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN A MODEST TRAINING AND REEQUIPMENT PROGRAM FOR HAITI ALONG THE LINES RECOMMENDED BY THE MILITARY SURVEY TEAM.

6. COMMENT: BRUTUS IS IN A CLASS FAR ABOVE HIS PREDECESSOR RAYMOND. EQUIPPED BY EXPERIENCE AND TEMPERAMENT TO BE A WISE COUNSELLOR, AND WITHOUT ANY HIGHER AMBITIONS OF HIS OWN, HE SHOULD BE AN IMPORTANT STABILIZING ELEMENT IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS WHICH PRESIDENT DUVALIER IS STILL DEVELOPING. BACKSTOPPED BY THE ACTION-ORIENTED AND PROFESSIONALLY COMPETENT DORCELY AS UNDER SECRETARY, BRUTUS BIDS FAIR TO MAKE A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO HAITI'S MORE RATIONAL AND OUTGOING FOREIGN POLICIES.

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